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ABSTRACT

A four-part study was undertaken at Virginia Western Community College to determine the effectiveness of using the Cooperative English Expression Tests (CEET) and/or high school English grades to place students in English 111 (Eng 111) or Developmental English 01 (Dev Eng 01). During Winter 1976, all students (N=110) enrolled in Dev Eng 01 were tested using the CEET to determine the tests' ability to predict student readiness for Eng 111. During Fall 1976, the relationships of CEET pre- and post-test scores were evaluated in Eng 111 and Dev Eng 01. During Fall 1978, a validated study compared Fall 1977 and 1978 passing rates in Eng 111 for specific score intervals on the CEET, and during Summer 1979, the relationship between high school English grades and CEET scores was determined based on a random sample of 220 students. Study results indicate that students scoring less than 41 on the CEET had less than a 40% chance of receiving a passing grade in Eng 111, whereas students scoring above 45 had a greater than 85% chance. A writing sample for students scoring in the 41-45 range was found to be effective in student placement. As 90% of the students achieving an "A" in English courses in their junior and senior years in high school scored above 45 on the CEET, it was recommended that these students be placed automatically in Eng 111. (AYC)

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A VALIDATION STUDY OF USING THE COOPERATIVE ENGLISH EXPRESSION TESTS AND HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH GRADES TO PLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENGLISH STUDENTS

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INTRODUCTION

One of the major problems of an "open-door" comprehensive community college has been and continues to be the placement of students into programs and courses of study that realistically match their abilities and academic backgrounds. Research studies (Koos, 1970; Roueche, 1968; Roueche and Ames, 1980; and Astin, 1975) have documented the increasing need for effective and efficient guidance and counseling for community college students who have the widest ranges of abilities, characteristics, interests, and academic backgrounds.

Statement of the Problem

Due to the diversity of English skills possessed by entering Virginia Western Community College (VWCC) students, the Humanities Division and the Office of Student Development felt that the locally constructed instrument used to screen students for English 111 had become inadequate. After surveying available instruments, the Humanities Division decided upon the Cooperative English Expression Tests (Educational Testing Service, 1960). Since national norms were available, but not appropriate, it was proposed that local norms for the Cooperative English Expression Tests were needed in order to establish placement guidelines for English 111 and Developmental English 01. In addition, faculty and counselors felt it appropriate to investigate the effectiveness and efficiency of using high school English grades in the placement of students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of using the Cooperative English Expression Tests and/or high school English grades to place students in English 111 or Developmental English 01.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The research and development design of the study was constructed as follows:

1. During Winter Quarter 1976 all students (110) enrolled in Developmental English 01 were tested using the Cooperative English Expressions Tests. This preliminary study proposed to establish score-intervals to evaluate the predictability of the Cooperative English Tests in terms of student readiness for English 111. Previous studies had established that a "S" (satisfactory) grade in Developmental English 01 was highly predictive (approximately 75%) of success in English 111.

2. During Fall 1976 the relationships of pre-test and post-test scores for the Cooperative English Expression Tests were evaluated in terms of academic grades received in English 111 and Developmental English 01.

3. During Fall 1978 a validation study comparing Fall 1977 and Fall 1978 rates of academic success (A, B, or C grades) in English 111 was completed for specific score-intervals of the Cooperative English Expression Tests.

4. During Summer 1979 the relationship of high school English grades and Cooperative English Expression Test scores was developed from a random sample of 220 students.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The results and analyses of the study presented methods and procedures (1) for developing score-intervals on the Cooperative English Expression Tests to place students in English 111 or

Developmental English 01, (2) to validate the academic success of student placements using the score-intervals of the Cooperative English Expression Tests, and (3) to develop the relationship of high school English grades/Cooperative English Expression Tests and academic success in English 111.

Development of Score-Intervals

Table 1 provides pre-test and post-test means by grades in English 111 and Developmental English 01.

TABLE 1

PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST MEANS BY GRADE IN ENGLISH 111 AND ENGLISH 01

English 111	N	Pre-test	Post-test	Pretest Standard Deviation
A	75	59.82	64.29	10.53
B	205	52.65	54.17	10.62
C	119	47.91	49.94	8.29
D	27	42.95	43.85	9.51
F	8	45.65	45.75	
	434			
Developmental English 01				
S	22	45.40	45.37	10.53
R	19	30.63	32.89	10.60

A descriptive analysis of the data identified that the mean pre-test and post-test scores of academically successful English students were higher than academically unsuccessful students.

Table 2 presents raw score-intervals by grades in English 111.

TABLE 2

CEET RAW SCORE-INTERVALS BY ENGLISH 111 GRADES
FALL 1976 DATA

COOPERATIVE ENGLISH EXPRESSION TESTS (CEET)

ENGLISH 111 GRADES	Score Intervals					
	16-30		31-45		46-80	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	4	13	10	3	144	18
B	8	28	88	28	319	40
C	7	24	138	43	227	28
D	4	14	38	12	24	3
F	6	21	24	8	40	5
W	-	-	21	6	48	6
	29	100	319	100	802	100

Results of the analyses indicated that 86% (690 out of 802) of the students scoring above 45 on the Cooperative English Expression Tests were successful (A, B, or C) in English 111; whereas, approximately 74% (236 out of 319) scoring in the 31-45 score-interval and approximately 65% (19 out of 29) of the students scoring below 30 were successful in English 111. These results supported the placement of students scoring above 45 into English 111. Further analyses were recommended for students scoring less than 45.

Validation of CEET Score-Interval

During Fall 1977 and 1978, additional validation studies were proposed in order to establish academic success (A, B, or C) of students in English 111 in terms of specific CEET score-intervals.

Table 3 presents 1977 and 1978 rates of success in English 111 in terms of CEET Score-Intervals.

TABLE 3

1977 AND 1978 RATES OF SUCCESS (A, B, or C) IN ENGLISH 111 AND COOPERATIVE ENGLISH EXPRESSION SCORES

Score Interval on Coop. Engl. Test	1977 Study Rate of Success (A, B, C) in Engl. 111 (N)	1978 Study Rate of Success (A, B, C) in Engl. 111 (N)
74 - 80	(9/11) .82*	(5/6) .83
71 - 73	(21/23) .91	(5/7) .71
66 - 70	(48/57) .84	(24/31) .77
61 - 65	(77/92) .84	(34/42) .81
56 - 60	(108/138) .78	(66/79) .85
51 - 55	(118/149) .79	(85/109) .78
46 - 50	(116/155) .75	(93/132) .70
41 - 45	(73/118) .62	(49/60) .82
36 - 40	(23/68) .34	(1/3) .33
31 - 35	(8/29) .28	-
less 31	(4/24) .17	(1/1) 1.00

*(9/11) .82 implies that 9 out of 11 or 82% of the students in the CEET score-interval 74-80 obtained A, B, or C in English 111.

Analyses of the data over a two-year period indicated that students scoring less than 41 on the Cooperative English Expression Tests have less than a 40% chance of success in English 111; whereas, students scoring above 45 have a success rate of 85%. It was noted that students scoring in the range of 41 to 45 had a significantly higher success rate in the Fall 1978 (82%) than Fall 1977 (62%). The successful placements of students during Fall 1978 resulted from the requirement of a writing sample graded by VWCC Learning Laboratory instructors. Placement of students into either English 111 or Developmental English 01 was contingent upon the quality of these writing samples. (It was recommended that this procedure of requiring writing samples be continued.)

Placement Using High School Grades

Further research in Summer 1979 was instituted to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of using high school English grades to place students in either English 111 or Developmental English 01. Successful results of this investigation would allow effective and efficient placements of students without the time, effort, and expense of using the Cooperative English Expression Tests. Since students were being successfully placed using the Cooperative English Expression Tests, it was felt unwise to discontinue this procedure. Instead, studies were instituted to investigate the relationship of high school English grades and score-intervals on the Cooperative English Expression Tests.

Table 4 provides high school English 12 grades (A, B, C, D, or F) in terms of score-intervals of the Cooperative English Expression Tests.

TABLE 4

HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH 12 GRADES AND
COOPERATIVE ENGLISH TEST SCORE-INTERVALS

Cooperative English Test Score Range	High School English 12									
	A		B		C		D		F	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Above 45	15	72	31	67	29	47	10	33	3	50
41 - 45	3	14	4	9	10	16	5	16	1	17
Below 41	3	14	11	24	23	37	15	51	2	33
	21	100	46	100	62	100	30	100	6	100

An analysis of the data indicated that students attaining A and B grades in high school English 12 have a high probability (67% - B and 72% - A) of scoring above 45 on the Cooperative English Tests. Students attaining C, D, or F grades in high school English 12 scores in all ranges in the Cooperative English Tests.

Table 5 provides high school English 11 grades (A, B, C, D, or F) in terms of score-intervals of the Cooperative English Expression Tests.

TABLE 5

HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH 11 GRADES AND
COOPERATIVE ENGLISH TEST SCORE-INTERVALS

Cooperative English Test Score-Intervals	High School English Grades									
	A		B		C		D		F	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Above 45	17	74	29	69	35	56	18	42	0	-
41 - 45	2	9	6	14	6	9	9	21	1	14
Below 41	4	17	7	17	22	35	16	37	6	86
	23	100	42	100	63	100	43	100	7	100

An analysis of the data indicated that students attaining A and B grades in high school English 11 have a high probability (69% - B and 74% - A) of scoring above 45 on the Cooperative English Tests. Students attaining C or D high school grades scored in all ranges, whereas, 85% of the students attaining F grades scored below 45.

Table 6 provides high school English 10 grades (A, B, C, D, or F) in terms of score-intervals of the Cooperative English Expression Tests.

TABLE 6

HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH 10 GRADES AND
COOPERATIVE ENGLISH TEST SCORE-INTERVALS

Cooperative English Test Score-Intervals	High School English Grades									
	A		B		C		D		F	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Above 45	10	77	33	61	41	59	15	37	2	29
41 - 45	1	8	7	13	11	16	5	12	-	-
Below 41	2	15	14	26	18	25	21	51	5	71
	13	100	54	100	70	100	41	100	7	100

An analysis of the data indicated that students attaining A and B grades in high school English 10 have a high probability (61% - B and 77% - A) of scoring above 45 on the Cooperative English Tests. Students attaining C or D high school grades scored in all ranges; whereas, 71% of the students attaining F grades scored below 40.

In addition to the analysis cited above, it was proposed that an investigation that examined any combination of A or B high school English grades would improve the student probability of scoring above 45 on the Cooperative English Expression Tests. (Remember 86% of students scoring above 45 were successful in English 111).

Table 7 provides a breakout of score-intervals for the Cooperative English Expression Tests and high school English 12 and 11 grades.

TABLE 7

COOPERATIVE ENGLISH TEST SCORES AND HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH GRADES

Cooperative English Test Score Range	English 12							
	A English 11				B English 11			
	A		B		A		B	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Above 45	9	90	24	75	9	75	13	76
41 - 45	1	10	6	19	-	-	2	12
Below 41	-	-	2	6	3	25	2	12
	10	100	32	100	12	100	17	100

Analysis of the data indicated the following:

1. Approximately 90% of the students attaining A in high school English 11 and 12 grades are predicted to score above 45 on the Cooperative English Tests.

2. Students scoring any combination of A or B in high school English 11 and 12 grades have approximately 75% probability of scoring above 45 on the Cooperative English Tests.

Further analyses blocked A or B grades in English 12/English 10 or English 11/English 10 do not provide sufficient numbers of students to predict high probabilities of success (above 45) on the Cooperative English Tests.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of using the Cooperative English Expression Tests and/or high school grades to place students in either English 111 or

Developmental English 01. Results of the study indicated that students scoring less than 41 on the Cooperative English Expression Tests have less than a 40% chance of success (A, B, or C) in English 111; whereas, students scoring above 45 have a success rate of greater than 85%. A writing sample for students scoring in the 41-45 range was found to be effective in placing students. Since 90% of the students attaining A in high school English 11 and 12 grades attained Cooperative English Expression Test scores above 45, it was recommended that the students be placed directly into English 111 without sitting for the Cooperative English Expression Tests. Since approximately 75% of the students scoring any combination of A and B (excluding A and A) in high school English 12 and 11 grades score above 45, further research should be directed in examining and evaluating the use of high school English grades in terms of the present procedures which have established an 85% success rate in placing students in English 111.

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